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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5670
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USDOCOSOUTH
USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, GR, GU, CY, SHUM
SUBJ: GOG ATTACKED FOR COE CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY OUTCOME

REF: ANKARA 3310

1. CONFUSION OVER CYPRUS-RELATED ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY IN STRASBOURG LAST WEEK SPARKED A BRIEF FLURRY OF EXCHANGES DURING THE EASTER HOLIDAYS BETWEEN GOG SPOKESMEN AND OPPOSITION LEADER PAPANDREOU. THE PASOK LEADER'S CHARGES THAT GREEK DIPLOMATS AND NEW DEMOCRACY DEPUTIES WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THOSE RESOLUTIONS UNFAVORABLE TO THE
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INTERESTS OF GREECE AND CYPRUS RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE PRESS ATTENTION.

2. ON APRIL 26, AN ARTICLE IN INDEPENDENT KATHIMERINI CLAIMED THAT GREEK DIPLOMATS AND OTHERS IN STRASBOURG HAD SUCCESSFULLY LOBBIED AGAINST THE ASSEMBLY'S CONSIDERING A PROPOSAL ENDORSING THE PUBLICATION OF

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THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ON TURKISH VIOLATIONS IN CYPRUS PREPARED BY THE EUROPEAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION. IN RESPONSE, A GOG SPOKESMAN HASTENED TO POINT OUT THAT KATHIMERINI HAD CONFUSED THE GREEK POSITIONS WITH REGARD TO TWO SEPARATE ISSUES BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY. THE FIRST, ASSERTED THE SPOKESMAN, WAS A PROPOSAL RECOMMENDING CONSIDERATION OF THE PUBLICATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT, A PROPOSAL WHICH GREECE SUPPORTED BUT WHICH WAS DEFEATED BY THE ASSEMBLY. THE SECOND WAS A PROPOSAL THAT CYPRUS, WHICH HAD NOT PARTICIPATED IN THE ASSEMBLY SINCE 1965, BE INVITED TO SEND A PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION ONCE AGAIN. THIS PROPOSAL WAS NOT SUBMITTED TO THE ASSEMBLY BECAUSE, SAID THE GOG SPOKESMAN,"IT WAS NOT DEEMED CONVENIENT AT THE PRESENT PHASE." (NOTE: AN MFA OFFICIAL TOLD US THAT THE CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT WAS OPPOSED AT THIS TIME TO THE IDEA OF SENDING A CYPRIOT PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION TO THE CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY, AND THEREFORE THE GREEK EFFORT HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL AND SUPPORTIVE OF THE GOC POSITION. THE KATHIMERINI JOURNALIST, SAID THE MFA OFFICIAL, HAD NOT UNDERSTOOD THAT THE CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT WAS OPPOSED TO THE PROPOSAL BECAUSE OF THE PROBLEMS ENTAILED IN SENDING A DELEGATION REPRESENTING BOTH COMMUNITIES ON CYPRUS.)

3. PAPANDREOU REFUSED, HOWEVER, TO ACCEPT THE GOG'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EXPLANATION. REFERRING TO THE KATHIMERINI ARTICLE, HE HOTLY CHARGED THAT THE UNTOWARD ACTIVITY OF GREEK DIPLOMATS IN STRASBOURG HAD LED TO THE VOTE BY THE ASSEMBLY NOT TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT. HOWEVER, WHEN PAPANDREOU NEXT LEARNED THAT THE GREEK DELEGATION HAD SPLIT IN VOTING ON THE ASSEMBLY'S RESOLUTION BASED ON THE KARASEK REPORT ON CYPRUS -- WITH TWO NEW DEMOCRACY DEPUTIES VOTING FOR IT, THREE ABSTAINING AND THE TWO PASOK DEPUTIES VOTING AGAINST -- HE ISSUED A SECOND, EVEN STRONGER CRITICISM IN WHICH HE EXPRESSED "ASTONISHMENT AND SHAME" AT THE FAILURE OF THE GREEKS TO OPPOSE UNANIMOUSLY. HE LAMBASTED THE NEW DEMOCRACY DELEGATES AND PROCLAIMED THAT A CONFRONTATION HAD OCCURRED IN STRASBOURG -- NOT BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY BUT RATHER "BETWEEN GREECE AND OUR CYPRIOT BROTHERS..WE NOW SHOW THE WHOLE WORLD THAT THERE ARE DIVERGENCIES OF VIEWS BETWEEN THE GREEK AND CYPRIOT DELEGATION, AND THIS CAN ONLY CAUSE IRREPARABLE HARM TO THE NATIONAL CAUSE."

4. OUR MFA SOURCE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE SPLIT IN GHE GREEK DELEGATION'S VOTE ON THE ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION

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ON CYPRUS WAS, INDEED, EMBARASSING. HE EXPLAINED THAT
COMPARED TO PREVIOUS ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS THERE WERE
SEVERAL SERIOUS OMISSIONS THIS YEAR. FOR INSTANCE,
HE SAID, THE GREEKS HAD SOUGHT, AS IN EARLIER YEARS,
TO HAVE REFERENCES TO RELEVANT UN RESOLUTIONS INSERTED
INTO THE VERSION ADOPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY, BUT HAD BEEN
UNSUCCESSFUL. THE MFA OFFICIAL SOMEWHAT LAMELY CONTINUED
THAT NEVERTHELESS THE RESULTING RESOLUTION HAD APPEARD AS A
RATHER INNOCUOUS DOCUMENT AND, BECAUSE OF A BREAKDOWN IN
COMMUNICATION AMONG THE NEW DEMOCRACY DELEGATES, TWO HAD VOTED
FOR IT WHILE THE OTHERS HAD ABSTAINED.

5. COMMENT: THE GREEK GENERALLY VIEW THE CYPRUS-
RELATED DEVELOPMENTS AT THE CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY AS
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A SETBACK, BUT THE MFA OFFICIAL COMMENTED THAT THE GOG
DID NOT ATTRIBUTE BOO MUCH SIGNIFICANCE TO THE ASSEMBLY'S
ACTIONS, SINCE IT IS ONLY A CONSULTATIVE BODY.
HOWEVER ONE LOOKS AT IT, THOUGH , IT DID PROVIDE
THE FIERY PAPANDREOU WITH AN UNEXPECTED OPPORTUNITY
TO MAKE SOME HEADLINES DURING A PERIOD WHEN THE NEWS
WAS OTHERWISE PRETTY DULL.
MCCLOSKEY

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